**Special Category Status for Chhattisgarh**

†546. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that some of the States have been placed in the special category for providing financial assistance;

(b) if so, the reasons for not including Chhattisgarh therein whereas this is a newly created poor and tribal dominated State; and

(c) whether Government propose to include this State in the special category in order to provide the financial assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Special Category Status has been accorded to some states on the basis of a set of criteria which include-having a strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure, predominantly large tribal population and limited & weak resource base compared to the development needs. Since Chhattisgarh does not have all these features, it is not feasible to include it under Special Category States.

(c) States have been raising, at various National Development Council (NDC) Meetings, the issue of modification(s) in the criteria for inclusion of States in the Special Category for allocation of Central Assistance. However, there is no consensus among the states on the issue. In the absence of a consensus amongst states, it may not be possible to grant Special Category Status of Chhattisgarh.

**Special financial package for Bihar**

547. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that at the time of bifurcation of Bihar into two States, Government have to allocate special financial package for the State of Bihar; and

(b) if so, what amount has been provided on that account?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) While approving the Bihar Reorganisation Bill, 1998 the Union Cabinet decided that a dedicated cell be set up in the Planning Commission under the direct charge of the Deputy Chairman to deal exclusively with Bihar so that with the help of better financial management and adequate devolution of funds from the Centre, multifaceted development of the State takes place especially with respect to core infrastructure. Accordingly, a Speical Plan for Bihar under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana has been formulated and approved by Government of India.

(b) An amount of Rs. 500 crore has been provided in the Annual Plan 2003-04 of Bihar (under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana)

**Grant under Central Road Fund for Rajasthan**

548. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Governmet of Rajasthan had proposed a revision in grant under Central Road Fund in August, 2002 as per the new guidelines for the projects approved and/or pending;

(b) if so, whether this proposal has been approved;

(c) if so, by when the revised grant would be allocated for the completion of pending projects and commencement of new projects already approved by the Central Government; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.